

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION FOR ARREST WARRANT

I, Jason M. Guyton, being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I am a Special Agent with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), currently assigned to HSI Cleveland, Ohio. I have been so employed since March 2009. As part of my daily duties as an HSI Special Agent, I investigate criminal violations relating to child exploitation and child pornography, including violations pertaining to the illegal production, distribution, receipt and possession of child pornography, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 2251(a), 2252(a) and 2252A, as well as juvenile sex trafficking, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1591. I have received training in the area of child pornography and child exploitation and have had the opportunity to observe and review numerous examples of child pornography (as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256) in all forms of media including computer media.

2. I am an “investigative or law enforcement officer” of the United States within the meaning of Section 2510(7) of Title 18, United States Code, and am empowered by law to conduct investigations of, and to make arrests for, offenses enumerated in Section 2516 of Title 18, United States Code.

3. This affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause that Robert D. MCWILLIAMS, age 29, currently incarcerated in the Geauga County jail, has possessed, received and distributed child pornography in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2252A(a)(2)(A) (receipt and distribution of child pornography); persuaded, induced, enticed, or coerced a minor to produce a depiction of sexually explicit conduct in violation of 18 U.S.C. §

2251(a) (sexual exploitation of children); and engaged in juvenile sex trafficking in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1591 (sex trafficking of children).

4. The statements contained in this affidavit are based upon my personal knowledge and observations, my training and experience, conversations with other law enforcement officers and witnesses, and the review of documents and records. This affidavit includes only those facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause and does not include all the facts uncovered during the investigation.

RELEVANT STATUTES

5. This Complaint involves violations of the following statutes:

- a. 18 U.S.C. §§ 2252A(a)(2), which prohibits a person from knowingly receiving, distributing or conspiring to receive or distribute any child pornography or any material that contains child pornography, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256(8), that has been mailed, or using any means or facility of interstate or foreign commerce shipped or transported in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce by any means, including by computer.
- b. 18 U.S.C. § 2251(a), which prohibits a person from using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing a minor to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purposes of producing visual depictions of such conduct and such depictions are produced using materials that had been mailed, shipped or transported in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce (i.e. camera manufactured outside the state) or depiction was transported in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce.

- c. 18 U.S.C. § 1591(a)(1) makes it a crime for any person knowingly in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce to recruit, entice, harbor, transport, provide, obtain, advertise, maintain, patronize, or solicit by any means a person, knowing or in reckless disregard of the fact that the person has not attained the age of 18 years and will be caused to engage in a commercial sex act.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVESTIGATION AND PROBABLE CAUSE

6. Affiant has reviewed the investigative reports from the Geauga County Sheriff's Office, Investigator Richard Warner from the Geauga County Prosecutor's Office, and members of the Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children ("ICAC") Task Force. The investigation has produced the following evidence against Robert D. McWilliams (hereafter "MCWILLIAMS"):

7. On October 4, 2019, Geauga County Sheriff's Office Deputy Sergeant Aaron Graley requested assistance from Investigator Warner regarding an investigation involving a minor child being extorted to send nude images to a social media profile that reflected the profile belonged to a female. Thereafter, Investigator Warner learned that the investigation involved multiple minor male victims.

8. Minor Victim #1 reported that he was contacted by an unknown person telling Minor Victim #1 to send nude images of himself or Minor Victim #1 would be exposed for smoking marijuana. Minor Victim #1 took sexually explicit photographs of himself and transmitted the images using his cell phone to the then unknown person.

9. In June of 2018, Minor Victim #1's mother received electronic messages on her cell phone from a then unknown individual. The messages included sexually explicit images of

her son and the words “he is sick” and “he needs help.” The Geauga County Sheriff’s Office was advised by Minor Victim #1’s parent that MCWILLIAMS, a priest associated with St. Helen’s Catholic Church in Newbury Twp., had knowledge of Minor Victim #1’s marijuana use and had previously offered to counsel Minor Victim #1 about that use.

10. Minor Victim #2 disclosed to Investigator Warner that he was contacted by a user profile on social media sometime in 2017 when he was 15 or 16 years of age. Minor Victim #2 believed the then unknown person was a female that either knew him from school or St. Helen’s Church. Minor Victim #2 sent sexually explicit images and videos to the “female’s” user profile at the request of the person using the “female’s” user profile. Thereafter, Minor Victim #2 received additional text messages from a then unknown person posing as the unknown “female’s” father. The messages advised Minor Victim #2 that he had to choose whether he wanted the “father” to tell Father Jay McPhillips or Father Bobbie McWilliams about the sexually explicit images. Minor Victim #2 selected MCWILLIAMS. The investigation later revealed that the person using the “female’s” user profile on social media and the “father” sending text messages were MCWILLIAMS.

11. Minor Victim #2 received additional messages from MCWILLIAMS posing as a minor female that solicited additional sexually explicit images. Each time MCWILLIAMS solicited images from Minor Victim #2, he told the victim that he had the previous images and would disseminate them to the victim’s friends and family if Minor Victim #2 did not comply.

12. On or about September 29, 2019, MCWILLIAMS sent several anonymous text messages to Minor Victim #2’s mother that included sexually explicit images of her son and the words “tell your man whore of a son to stop sending my underage daughter nude pictures” and

“There are pictures, videos and the two of them telling each other what they are going to do to one another when they fuck.” MCWILLIAMS’ text messages further advised Minor Victim #2’s mother that “I will not be going to the authorities.”

13. Investigator Warner reviewed the contents of Minor Victim #2’s cell phone and located several messages from the phone number (440) 641-2473. Investigator Warner further reviewed the cell phone belonging to Minor Victim #2’s mother and located the messages she described along with the phone number (440) 359-4066.

14. Investigator Warner researched the phone number (440) 359-4066, and learned the number was associated with the mobile application “TextMe.” TextMe is a multi-platform messaging app that offers users free unlimited texts, calling and picture messaging to any phone number in the United States, Canada, and 40 countries around the world. A user can send pictures, voice and video messages to another phone number and can also upload images and videos directly to Dropbox Inc., a cloud storage provider. A TextMe user can obtain multiple phone numbers and manage them from a single account. On October 17, 2019, Investigator Warner issued a subpoena to TextMe for subscriber information, including IP addresses and communication logs, for phone number (440) 359-4066.

15. Investigator Warner also researched the phone number (440) 641-2473, and learned the number was associated with the mobile application “TextNow.” TextNow is a Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) service that allows users to text and call any number in the United States and Canada. It can also be used to make international calls for a fee. TextNow provides a user with a real phone number that can be used on any smart device with an Internet connection.

The application can be used on multiple devices, including smartphones, tablets, laptops or desktops.

16. TextMe provided subscriber information, including IP addresses and communication logs, for phone number (440) 359-4066. Investigator Warner located the messages between (440) 359-4066 and Minor Victim #2's mother on the date and time reported. The IP address used by (440) 359-4066 to contact Minor Victim #2's mother resolved to Spectrum. On October 31, 2019, Investigator Warner issued a subpoena to Spectrum for the date and times of the messages and learned that the IP address was registered to Minor Victim #2's residence. MCWILLIAMS was present by invitation in Minor Victim #2's residence at the time the messages were sent to Minor Victim #2's mother and Minor Victim #2's mother recalled MCWILLIAMS had excused himself from the room to make a call.

17. On December 4, 2019, Investigator Warner received a search warrant in the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas for the residence and office of MCWILLIAMS located at XXXXX Pearl Road in Strongsville, Ohio [redacted]. On December 5, 2019, Investigators with the Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force assisted with the search warrant and seized several computer devices, including a Seagate external hard drive, a Hitachi solid state drive, and an Apple iPhone.

18. On December 13, 2019, Investigator Warner received a search warrant for TextNow from the Chardon Municipal Court for the content, communication, and other identifying information related to phone number (440) 641-2473. Investigator Warner reviewed the results from TextNow and located chat and SMS communications between Minor Victim #2 and (440) 641-2473 from September of 2019. The messages located by Investigator Warner were

consistent with the messaging described by Minor Victim #2 that occurred when he was under the age of 18. Investigator Warner also located sexually explicit images and videos of Minor Victim #2. The subscriber information provided by TextNow included the following:

Username: “daddymikeb

Phone number +1 440-641-2473

Email: Michael_bella@aol.com

Date of Birth: 7/19/2018

Phone Ownership From: 2019-08-01 04:00:00 UTC

Phone Ownership To: 2019-10-17 03:59:59 UTC

19. Investigator Warner knew from the forensic extraction of MCWILLIAMS’ Apple iPhone and his Apple iTunes back up files, that MCWILLIAMS used the email address “michael_bella@aol.com” to send emails from his iPhone.

20. Investigator Warner also located in the production from TextNow several nude images of a pubescent minor female shared by MCWILLIAMS using the number (440) 641-2473. One image that was sent by MCWILLIAMS to Minor Victim #2 on September 28, 2019, was titled “fab47242-7bab-5bd6-a189-26b6b35e49b1.jpeg” and depicted a pubescent female photographed from below looking up at her exposed vagina. This image was consistent with other images of a female with the same physical features including hair length and color, same bra and same chipped fingernail polish found on MCWILLIAMS’ laptop computer.

21. Investigator Warner further reviewed MCWILLIAMS laptop seized from his office and located several images of apparent juvenile males engaged in the lascivious exhibition of their genital area. Two images dated May 17, 2018, titled “IMG_6052.jpg” and

“IMG_6051.jpg” depicted Minor Victim #2, at age 16, engaged in the lascivious display of his penis.

22. Investigator Warner also located SMS messages between MCWILLIAMS and Minor Victim #1 on MCWILLIAMS laptop computer in the iTunes backup file. MCWILLIAMS used his own Sprint cell phone number, (330) 962-XXXX [redacted] to communicate with Minor Victim #1 on or about November 26, 2017, when Minor Victim #1 was 15 years old. In addition, MCWILLIAMS had three sexually explicit images of Minor Victim #1 taken in May of 2018 when Minor Victim #1 was 16 years old. “IMG_6048.PNG” depicts Minor Victim #1 standing in his bathroom holding his erect penis. “IMG_6049.PNG” depicts Minor Victim #1 standing in his shower nude holding his semi erect penis. Finally, “IMG_6050.PNG” depicts Minor Victim #1 standing in his bathroom nude while holding his semi-erect penis.

23. On January 30, 2020, Investigator Warner located chat messages on MCWILLIAMS iPhone between MCWILLIAMS and a Minor Victim #3. In the messages, MCWILLIAMS offered to pay money and provide other things of value to Minor Victim #3 for sexual acts. The communications occurred between March 25, 2018 and June 2, 2018, but it was clear from the messages that MCWILLIAMS had previously met with Minor Victim #3 and engaged in sexual conduct. Investigator Warner located Minor Victim #3 and interviewed him regarding the messages.

24. Minor Victim #3 stated he met MCWILLIAMS on Grindr, which, according to Grindr.com, is the “world’s largest social networking app for gay, bi, trans and queer people.” MCWILLIAMS identified himself as “Mike” and offered to pay Minor Victim #3 for sex. Minor Victim #3 stated he engaged in oral sex with MCWILLIAMS on three occasions and in exchange

was paid approximately \$200 by MCWILLIAMS. One sexual act occurred at a hotel in Medina, Ohio. Minor Victim #3 was 15 years old at the time.

25. On January 31, 2020, Investigator Warner obtained records from the Red Roof Inn in Medina, Ohio confirming that MCWILLIAMS rented a room on October 25, 2019, for one night and booked the room through Expedia.com, an online reservation service whose business affects interstate and foreign commerce. MCWILLIAMS provided his full name, address and phone number on the guest registration card.

26. During Investigator Warner's review of MCWILLIAMS laptop computer, he located a Dropbox container, indicative of MCWILLIAMS using cloud storage. On January 22, 2020, Investigator Warner received a search warrant from the Chardon Municipal Court for Dropbox, Inc. for container 1128051104 with the associated email address of "forsafe_keeping@aol.com." Investigator Warner reviewed the production from Dropbox, Inc. and discovered three folders with approximately 150 files of sexually explicit conduct involving minors. A representative sample of the images included the following:

- a. 1 video file of a nude infant boy bound and raped by an adult male;
- b. Approximately 5 video files of infant boys engaging in sexual activity with adult males;
- c. Approximately 7 video files of boys under the age of 5 engaging in sexual activity with adult males;
- d. 1 video file of a minor pubescent child engaging in sexual activity with a donkey.

27. Det. William Conn of the Cleveland Police Department and Ohio ICAC performed a forensic examination of MCWILLIAMS' Seagate external hard disk drive and recovered 1,300 image and multi-media files in a folder labeled "Yaaaaas" that depicted sexually explicit conduct involving minors, including the lascivious exhibition of the genital area, oral sex and anal intercourse. Det. Conn also located approximately 400 image files on MCWILLIAMS' Hitachi solid state drive that depicted sexually explicit conduct involving minors. The device also contained numerous references to "BIBCAM", a term created from "Boys in Bedroom" and "cam," referencing an internet camera.

28. The conduct alleged herein occurred in the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division and elsewhere.

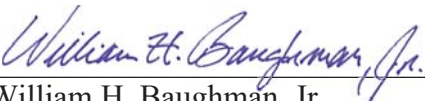
CONCLUSION

29. Based on the foregoing, there is probable cause to believe that Robert D. MCWILLIAMS violated 18 U.S.C. §§ 2252A(a)(2) (receiving and distributing child pornography); 18 U.S.C. § 2251(a) (sexual exploitation of a minor); and 18 U.S.C. § 1591(a)(1) (Sex Trafficking of Children).



Jason M. Guyton
Special Agent
Homeland Security Investigations

Sworn to via telephone after submission by reliable electronic means [Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1]
on this 21st day of February 2020.


William H. Baughman, Jr.
United States Magistrate Judge

